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WE PICK THE OSCAR WINNERS

And sorry, everyone, we're hoping Leo doesn't win. 12



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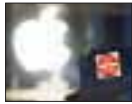
BACK TO 'BAD'

In 'Triple 9,' Aaron Paul plays a junkie
screw-up once again. But he says his
character's not another Jesse Pinkman. 11



APPLE TO TESTIFY MARCH 1

1 FBI Director James Comey and Apple Senior Vice President and general counsel Bruce Sewell will testify at a March 1 congressional hearing on encryption issues, the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee said in a statement Thursday. The hearing comes amid a dispute between the tech giant and the government over unlocking an iPhone used by one of the San Bernardino, California, shooters. **REUTERS**



BULGER MASTURBATING

2 James "Whitey" Bulger was punished in prison for masturbating in his cell, Boston.com reported. Federal inmates are prohibited from all sexual activity. Bulger was caught in the act last June, and the punishment was 30 days in solitary. The incident was dug up by the Boston Globe, which found documents indicating Bulger was caught in the act with the lights on. He defended himself by saying, "I'm 85 years old. My sex life is over." He also reportedly claimed he was just applying medicated powder to his irritated genitals. **REUTERS**

ZIKA VACCINE PATHWAY

3 President Barack Obama expressed optimism Thursday about the possibilities for a vaccine against Zika, a virus he said turned out to be not especially complicated. "We just had a meeting about Zika, where we actually think there's a promising pathway for diagnostics and vaccines on this," Obama said during a panel discussion about precision medicine. "It's not a real complicated virus, apparently." **REUTERS**



ALL PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

7

THINGS YOU
NEED TO KNOW

VESSEL AGROUND

7 An NYPD officer looks at a fishing vessel on the shore of Rockaway Beach on Thursday in Queens. The fishing vessel ran aground during stormy seas and strong winds the night before and a Coast Guard vessel capsized while rescuing its crew.

QUEENS KID BUTT GROPER

4 Police are seeking a man alleged to have forcibly touched a 10-year-old girl in Queens. The suspect allegedly tried to grope a 17-year-old girl's buttocks once before, and this week allegedly tried to grope a 10-year-old girl's buttocks, police said. The suspect was captured by surveillance cameras. **SAIM NEWHOUSE**



FREE PUPPY PARTY

5 Next week get rid of the Monday blues at a party where the main guests are all kinds of adorable. In celebration of Leap Day, the Residence Inn by Marriott will offer a full day of free activities throughout Manhattan — including an afternoon puppy party. From noon to 4 p.m. on Feb. 29, the pet-friendly Residence Inn Midtown East, at 148 E. 48th Street, will host a puppy party in its lobby where anyone can come cuddle with the balls of fur to let go of every bit of stress to start the week right. **ANGY ALTAMIRANO**

DUO WANTED IN ROBBERY

6 Police are looking for two suspects wanted in connection with a robbery at a Queens hotel. On Feb. 22 at about 4:30 a.m., a 43-year-old man met the suspect, a female, near 82nd Street and Roosevelt Avenue, according to authorities. Both of them went back to the woman's hotel room at 73-00 Queens Boulevard, where a male suspect was inside, police said. **ANGY ALTAMIRANO**



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BRIEFS

Coast Guard rescue sailors from stranded boat off Rockaway Beach

A U.S. Coast Guard boat capsized off the coast of Rockaway Beach Thursday morning while coming to the aid of a fishing boat that had run aground.

The five Coast Guard crewmembers from the 25-foot rescue vessel were not injured when they got to the beach after the capsizing, ABC reported. The

fishing crew was also uninjured after being rescued with a Coast Guard helicopter and basket.

The New York City Office of Emergency Management told ABC that the NYPD and FDNY assisted the flipped Coast Guard vessel. There were large waves at the time of the incident.

The reason why the fishing vessel initially ran aground remained unclear as of deadline.

JASON NUCKOLLS

Suspects ask pharmacy worker if he wants to get shot during Bronx robbery

Police said two men robbed a Bronx pharmacy and asked an employee if he wanted to be shot after he confronted them.

On Feb. 20 at about 3:40 a.m., the suspects entered a Rite Aid Pharmacy at 3480 Jerome Avenue. They then took shaving razors from shelves and hid them inside their pants

and a book bag.

When an employee confronted the duo, one of the suspects asked him if he wanted to get shot, police said. No weapon was shown and the employee backed off.

The two then fled the store in an unknown direction.

Both suspects are described to be black or Hispanic men, 5 feet 9 and 170 pounds.

ANGY ALTAMIRANO

SI toddler tortured to death by sitter: DA



Gloria Fields GLORIA FIELDS/FACEBOOK

Documents claim the child died as a result of the injuries sustained over two days of abuse.

JASON NUCKOLLS
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

An arraignment for the babysitter who allegedly killed a Staten Island 16-month-old last weekend has revealed lurid details surrounding the child's death.

At the Wednesday arraignment for Gloria Fields, 31, the death of Anthony Delgado was described by prosecutors as members of the child's family shrieked and cried, NBC reported.

Court documents referenced in a New York Daily News article detailed the torture that the child suffered over a two-day period, which resulted in fatal injuries including skull fractures, a broken clavicle and internal bleeding. "For 48 hours, this deprived woman systemati-

cally tortured a 16-month-old baby," Staten Island DA Michael McMahon was quoted by the Daily News.

Some of the details revealed at the arraignment include Fields inserting a pencil into Delgado's rectum for 36 hours, her using heroin and smoking marijuana while caring for the child and her slamming him into the ground and hitting him, the Daily News added.

Prosecutors also alleged that she left the writing utensil inside the boy as she took him around the city on public transit, according to NBC.

"I cannot believe that one person would take the value of a child and do the things that she's done to that baby, an innocent baby," Delgado's aunt was quoted by NBC.

Fields, a reported schizophrenic, entered a plea of not guilty to charges concerning Delgado's alleged torture and death before she was sent to Rikers Island, awaiting a March 21 court date, according to the Daily News.

"I cannot believe that one person would take the value of a child and do the things that she's done to that baby, an innocent baby."

Delgado's aunt

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TODAY!

Nonprofit helps South African kids triumph on and off the soccer field

VC+ joined forces with nonprofit The Dreamfields Project to bring soccer kits to children in the rural town of Cottondale.



ANGY ALTAMIRANO
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

For children in a rural area of South Africa, soccer is more than just a sport, and one New York City-based nonprofit is making sure their young talent and passion continue to grow.

VC+ is a nonprofit collective of creative professionals who have come together to help existing charities. The group partnered with South African nonprofit The Dreamfields Project to help chil-



For many of the children it was the first time they owned a team uniform or wore cleats. KRISTEN CAHILL/PAUL BASTIN

dren have access to their own unique soccer attire. And more plans are in store to help children in that nation.

"The whole idea was we have all these resources and the creative know-how; let's help out people who don't," VC+ co-founder Howard Grandison said. "[Let's help the] people that are doing good but don't have the bandwidth and ideas and marketing to

maybe get noticed."

VC+'s first project was the collaboration with The Dreamfields Project, which has a mission of giving resources for playing soccer to towns and rural schools in South Africa.

The two groups traveled to Cottondale, a rural town in Mpumalanga, South Africa, where creative workshops were held at 13 different schools.

"It's super rural, there is not a lot of opportunity out there for these kids," Grandison said. "It's not a lot of support for the community, so it seemed like the perfect place."

Through these workshops, the children were given the opportunity to create and design their own soccer uniforms for their individual leagues — which were organized by Dreamfields.

Giving the children

the chance to design their own uniforms gave each the feeling of ownership and also gave them opportunities they normally do not have, Grandison said.

Once the kids created the designs, VC+ brought them back to New York City for each to be brought to life, and in September of 2014 the groups reunited in the rural town to deliver the soccer kits to each of the schools.

For many of the children, Grandison added, it was the first time they owned a team uniform or even wore soccer cleats — as the majority played barefoot. The children later held their first soccer tournament.

Although VC+ plans to reach out to other charities, Grandison said that they plan to go back to South Africa and continue working with the commu-




The children were given the chance to design their own soccer jerseys.

nity there.

The next goal will be to help girls who play netball in the town.

"We still feel like we need to make sure that there is a solid foothold in what we started already," he said.

To continue supporting the children of Cottondale, Dreamfields offers the Dreamfields FC Collection on dreamfieldscollection.org where you can purchase items with the children's designs. All the money raised goes back to the kids.



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Seven charged in theft of \$500K worth of heating oil

As part of a yearlong investigation into industry fraud, seven people were indicted Wednesday on charges related to the theft of almost \$500,000 of heating oil from a terminal in Brooklyn, according to authorities.

Staten Island residents Paul Ciliento, 37, Alexander Cocchiola, 57, Peter D'Arco, 65, Frederick DeCicco, 48, Bart A. DiCarlo, 26, and Angelo Guadagno, 51; and Florida resident Scott Vitello, 39, were charged in State Supreme Court with grand larceny in the second and third degrees.

According to prosecutors, between January and July of 2014 the accused were part of the theft of hundreds of thousands of gallons of heating oil from Buckeye Partners L.P., which owns and operates an oil terminal at 722 Court St. in Brooklyn.

During the specified time period, Vitello

managed the terminal and with the help of DiCarlo — who worked as a terminal operator — allegedly allowed unauthorized individuals and tanker trucks to pull into the loading racks, fill the tanks with heating oil and leave the terminal with the oil — which was sold for a fraction of the retail cost, authorities said.

Angelo Guadagno acted as a broker and negotiated prices, scheduled pickup times and made arrangements for Cocchiola, owner of Cypress Fuel, and Ciliento, owner of Boomerang Trucking, to steal the heating oil from the Brooklyn terminal, according to prosecutors.

D'Arco, owner of SJ Fuel, and DeCicco, driver for MDC Services, also allegedly worked directly with Vitello and DiCarlo, authorities said, to organize the unauthorized pickups.




A heating oil truck gauge GETTY IMAGES

According to prosecutors, as an attempt to cover the theft, Vitello and DiCarlo took apart counters that would track the number of gallons of oil dispensed at the loading racks. They changed the positioning of various security cameras at the terminal as well.

Over the course of the six months, unauthorized trucks were allowed to enter the terminal more than 50 times — often during late evening and early morning hours, authorities said.


ANGY ALTAMIRANO

Weekend Feb 26-Feb 28 Transit Changes



- 1 Downtown and Uptown** trains skip 28th, 23rd, and 18th Sts. 2 and 3 trains provide alternate service.
No trains between 14th St and South Ferry.
- 2 E 180th St-bound** trains run express from 241st St to E 180th St.
Service operates between 241st St and E 180th St and between Flatbush Av and E 180th St.
Trains run local in both directions between 34th St-Penn Station and Chambers St.
- 3 Rockaway Av** and Van Siclen Av Stations are closed for renovation.
- 4 Trains** run local in both directions between 34th-Penn Station and Chambers St.
- 5 Trains** make local stops in both directions at 23rd and 50th Sts.
Trains run via the F in both directions between W 4th St and Jay St-MetroTech.
- 6 Ozone Park/Far Rockaway-bound** trains skip 135th, 116th, 110th, 103rd, 96th, 88th, 81st, and 72nd Sts.
Brooklyn-bound trains skip 111th and 104th Sts.
- 7 Hudson Yards-bound** trains skip 111th, 103rd, 90th, 82nd, 74th, 69th, 52nd, 46th, 40th and 33rd Sts.

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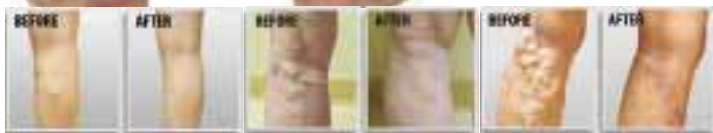


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Hundreds gather outside the Western District Police Station during a march through the streets of Baltimore to seek justice for the death of Freddie Gray, who died from injuries suffered in police custody. GETTY IMAGES

SPEAKING AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY DOESN'T MAKE ONE ANTI-POLICE

The first time I wrote a Facebook post about my disappointment in the number of slain unarmed black teens due to police shootings – it was met with harsh criticism.

Either the spouses or children of cops on my timeline immediately got defensive, telling me that I should “mourn for the cops,” that “all police aren’t bad” and I’m “ungrateful.”

But since when was I not allowed to consider the life of those who died at the hands of police?

How was grieving the death of another and calling for justice an affront to those lawful officers who don’t abuse their power? Given the recent, highly publicized transgressions made by some police organizations, you would think they felt above reproach.

This week, police branches across the country are boycotting Beyoncé’s world tour given the recent awareness she has brought to instances of police brutality. The Miami Fraternal Order of the Police has been adamant on not ensuring proper security on their end for the famous entertainer because they want folks to “Back the Blue, Boycott Beyoncé.”

THE ERNEST OPINION



**ERNEST
OWENS**
@MrErnestOwens

“To taint police officers globally in the Super Bowl is really wrong,” Sgt. Ed Mullins, president of the Sergeants Benevolent Association in New York City, recently said to the press. “[Beyoncé] made a statement and now law enforcement is making a statement. What’s clear is that no one in the country is trying to resolve the issues between communities of color and the distrust of law enforcement,” he added.

It’s that kind of response that has made me skeptical about the current mentality of the police department. If the mission is to “protect and serve,” there shouldn’t be a double standard when it comes to those who practice their First Amendment right of free speech.

So because police feel offended by a certain message, that means they now can take away their ability to protect certain citizens? Yeah, no. Just because a person is against police brutality doesn’t

mean they are against the entire police force. When officers get defensive about those who question the unlawful behavior of some cops, it suggests that they are either naïve about police brutality or nonchalant about it.

Either way, to reprimand those who do call out the injustices when they occur is undemocratic. It reduces the power of civilians and taxpayers who fund the defense of their communities and heightens their fear of those that are expected to protect them. If I can’t feel as though I can criticize the actions of police when they are in fact wrong – who can?

What is often left out of the narrative is the public admission of police officers that call out others in the force. How much has society allowed for other police chiefs or officers to critique the nature of those in their department that have obstructed justice? Not a lot. So we shouldn’t feel inclined to misrepresent those who speak out in a way that doesn’t actually inflict harm. Whether it’s myself or Beyoncé, we should all agree that free speech matters.

Kelly heading home next week after record long US space flight



Astronaut Scott Kelly GETTY IMAGES

NASA astronaut Scott Kelly, who returns next week after nearly a year aboard the International Space Station, said on Thursday the secret to enduring the longest U.S. spaceflight is marking individual milestones, not ticking days off the calendar.

Since arriving at the space station on March 27, 2015, Kelly and Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko have served with eight different crewmates, unpacked six cargo ships, weathered two botched supply runs and participated in dozens of science experiments.

Kelly also made three spacewalks outside the \$100 billion station, which flies about 250 miles above Earth, and Kornienko made one. "I've tried to do this ... with a deliberate pace, looking not really at the end, but at the next milestone," Kelly told reporters during his last inflight news conference.

Kelly and Kornienko's stint on the station, at about 340 days – roughly twice as long as any previous U.S. mission – is intended to provide medical and engineering information to prepare for three-year missions to Mars.

Four Soviet-era cosmonauts flew longer missions aboard the now-defunct Mir space station. The longest flight was a 437-day mission between January 1994 and March 1995 by cosmonaut Valeri Polyakov, a physician.

"Physically, I feel pretty good," said Kelly,

"I could go another 100 days; I could go another year if I had to."

Kelly

52, a veteran of three previous spaceflights. "Even though I really look forward to going home, it's not like I'm climbing the walls."

Kelly's medical tests will continue for months after his return. His identical twin brother Mark Kelly, a former NASA astronaut, is participating in a series of related studies looking for genetic changes caused by the high radiation and weightless environment of space.

Scott Kelly, who previously spent 159 days on the station, said the hardest part of being in space for so long was being separated from his friends and family.

"The space station is a magical place," Kelly said, but added that even after a year, "it's just not normal."

After medical checks next week, Kelly said he will go to his Houston home to jump in his pool.

Kelly, Kornienko and cosmonaut Sergey Volkov are due to depart the station at 8:05 p.m. EST on Tuesday and land in Kazakhstan three-and-a-half hours later. **REUTERS**

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When is the Deadline?

Applications must be postmarked or submitted online no later than **APRIL 12, 2016**. Late applications will not be considered.

What Happens After You Submit an Application?

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10 NEWS

BRIEF

U.S. to submit "significant" sanctions resolution on North Korea

The United States will propose to the U.N. Security Council on Thursday what diplomats said would be a significant expansion of sanctions against North Korea over its latest nuclear test.

"Ambassador [Samantha] Power intends to submit ... a draft sanctions resolution in response to [North Korea's] recent nuclear test and subsequent proscribed ballistic missile launch," spokesman Kurtis Cooper said in a statement.

The resolution, if adopted, would call for the blacklisting of more than two dozen individuals and entities, tighten restrictions on North Korean financing and banking and add tough measures on cargo inspections aimed at catching sanctions violations, diplomats said.

"We look forward to working with the council on a strong and comprehensive response to [North Korea's] latest series of tests aimed at advancing their nuclear weapons program," Cooper said.

Western diplomats told Reuters that limiting North Korean access to international ports was among the measures Washington pushed Beijing to accept.

REUTERS

HEY, AMERICA — ARE YOU SURE TRUMP IS THE ONE?

THE FOREMAN OPINION



**TOM
FOREMAN**

I don't want you to think I'm trying to run your life. We've been family for a long time now, and we'll still be family afterward no matter what you decide. But you seem to be getting serious about this guy, Donald Trump, becoming our president. And I want to make sure you are thinking this through before you commit.

First, let's go over the positives. He is certainly self-confident. I've frankly never met anyone more so. You may recall the other night at dinner when I asked if he'd like some salad and he not only refused but offered to punch me in the mouth. Now that's decisive.

He is well off. No one seems to know precisely how much money he has, but it appears to be a lot. I mean most of the guys you date ride around on buses — he landed his helicopter in

our back yard! (Remind me, btw, to go by the garden center and pick up some new shrubs. You might ask Mr. Mon-eybags if he'll cover the cost of that. Just saying.)

And he inspires people. The other day a guy told me that your beau has motivated him to consider applying for Canadian citizenship, and he wasn't even considering it until they met.

But what do you really know about this guy of yours? He brags about never having been in a relationship like this before, and honestly I can see why that is attractive. Many of your previous suitors have let you down, even that

one from a few years ago who promised he'd "change" everything. However, all the unknowns about your new fellow bring uncertainties.

Sure, your little friend Minnesota ran off with that guy, Jesse, for a while, and we all remember California's fling with Arnold. But we're talking about all of you, America, and before you toss aside all of your more traditional dates, I just want you to be sure this is the serious candidate you want for your serious matters ahead.

Again, I stress that this is your decision. Our family has been great for a long time because we are all free to make our own choices. I have the greatest faith that your decision will be right or we will eventually make it right.

And you know, America, I will love you just the same.

BRIEF

UN to announce new round of Syria talks: envoy

The United Nations will name a date on Friday for Syria's warring parties to return to the negotiating table for a second round of talks, U.N. Syria envoy Staffan de Mistura said on Thursday.

De Mistura abruptly aborted

a first round of talks Feb. 3 and urged countries in the International Syria Support Group (ISSG), led by the United States and Russia, to do more preparatory work.

They met in Munich and pushed for a cease-fire deal, resulting in an agreement on

a "cessation of hostilities" that President Bashar al-Assad's government and the opposition have both said they could support.

De Mistura said he would brief the U.N. Security Council on Friday and then announce a date for a new round of talks. REUTERS



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In "Triple 9" Aaron Paul plays an ex-cop-turned-thief wrestling with a drug problem, among other issues. BOB MAHONEY, OPEN ROAD FILMS

wknd

THE FUN STARTS HERE

Aaron Paul goes on a ride along

For "Triple 9," the "Breaking Bad" actor got to revisit the underbelly of society.



MATT PRIGGE
@mattprigge
matt.prigge@metro.us

Acting always entails research, but "Triple 9" is a different story. In the new thriller, Aaron Paul plays a disgraced ex-cop who's part of a gang of thieves filled out by former mercenaries and corrupt police officers. That meant doing ride alongs with the LAPD through East L.A. What he saw could have come right out of a movie, and not just "Triple 9" itself.

"We pulled over this guy — I forget his name, but it was something that's terrifying, like 'Psycho,'" the actor, 36, recalls. The cop arrest-

ed him, finding a gun whose serial number had been shaved off. He already had two strikes against him, meaning he'd be in jail for the rest of his life. When they got back to the station, Paul wound up interviewing him, despite finding him to be the scariest person he'd ever seen. Then he got a surprise: "Turns out he was a big fan of 'Breaking Bad.'"

Every cast member from "Triple 9" has stories like this; Paul recalls one from co-star Casey Affleck's own ride along, which involved a stand-off that ended with a perp leaping out of a window holding an infant in one hand, an AK-47 in the other. For Paul such tales stressed how real the film is — how the worst things we see in "Triple 9" and

"Breaking Bad" often-times really happen.

Paul came away with a lot of respect for cops — he emphatically recommends doing your own ride along — but also an understanding that there's no clean line between good and bad.

"You would see these little kids, 7 or 8 years old, on their bikes. They'd see us pulling up, and they'd jump off their bikes and run into a store," he recalls. Paul would watch the cops run after them and come back with proof they were selling drugs for a gang. "These kids don't have a choice. It's all they know. For the adults, it's all they know. They've grown up on the streets their whole lives."

For Paul, "Triple 9" isn't just another gig

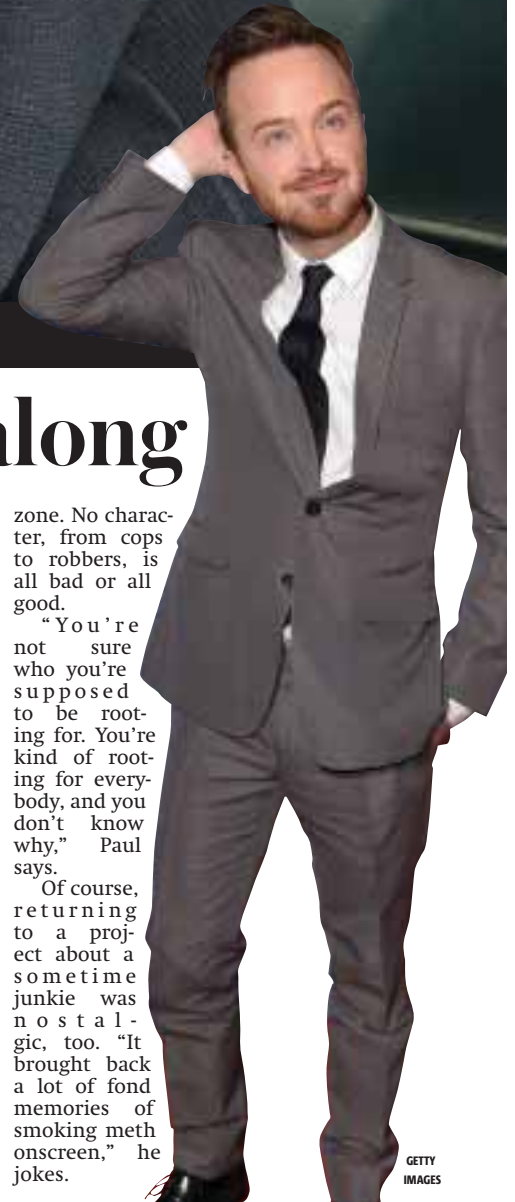
about the underworld; it's a film where he gets to again play an addict. And Paul didn't want to be trapped forever in the "Breaking Bad" world.

"I definitely got a lot of scripts sent my way for drugged-out characters. That's the last thing I wanted to do," Paul says. "Triple 9" was an exception, and not only because of its comically big-name cast (in addition to Affleck, there's Chiwetel Ejiofor, Anthony Mackie, Norman Reedus, Woody Harrelson and Kate Winslet, playing a Russian mafioso). The director, John Hillcoat, has a reputation for dark, brutal films about violence, including "The Proposition" and "Lawless." Paul knew it would be an honest but humane look at the moral gray

zone. No character, from cops to robbers, is all bad or all good.

"You're not sure who you're supposed to be rooting for. You're kind of rooting for everybody, and you don't know why," Paul says.

Of course, returning to a project about a sometime junkie was nostalgic, too. "It brought back a lot of fond memories of smoking meth onscreen," he jokes.



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Who should win the Oscars

We all know who will take home the trophies. That doesn't mean they should. **MATT PRIGGE**

Unlike most years, the Oscars are in the bag. We all know this is Leo's year, ditto Sly's and Brie's (unless Saoirse sneaks in for an upset). So rather than

bore you with predictions like everyone else is doing, we'll do something even less useful: Behold our picks of who we'd like to win.

SUPPORTING ACTRESS: ROONEY MARA, "CAROL"



Rooney Mara totally made up for appearing in "Pan" by killing it in "Carol." **THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY**

Mara's actually a co-lead (with Cate Blanchett), but so it goes. As a department store clerk fighting through '50s oppression to be with an older woman, she, like

"45 Years," has to show everything in minute facial expressions, her insides a roiling mess. The same words describe Alicia Vikander in "The Danish Girl," whose win would also be fine with us.

ACTOR: MATT DAMON, "THE MARTIAN"



Bring Matt Damon home his Oscar for "The Martian." **TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX**

This should go to Michael B. Jordan for "Creed." But he wasn't nominated, foolishly, leaving a pretty blah field of lily-white nominees. Of these, the closest to the best was

Damon's endearingly upbeat, goofy turn as a brainiac botanist who finds crafty ways to survive on Mars. Then again, what kind of monster hates ABBA?

ACTRESS: CHARLOTTE RAMPLING, "45 YEARS"

The furor over the actress' thoughtless, defensive response to #OscarsSoWhite — something or other about black performers not deserving it this year — seems to have died down. (And she claimed she was misquoted, for whatever that's worth.) So now we can safely say this: As a woman who realizes her longtime husband still pines for the One Who Got Away (by dying, as it were), she gave the most heart-wrenching turn of the five female leads. Yes, she was even better than Cate Blanchett in "Carol." That's saying something.



Charlotte Rampling gave one of her best performances in the English drama "45 Years." **SUNDANCE SELECTS**

SUPPORTING ACTOR: SYLVESTER STALLONE, "CREED"



The star of "Cobra" was supergood in "Creed." **WARNER BROS. PICTURES**

It will be a sentimental pick, but one that's right on: Sly found new things in a character he's lived with for 40 years. He's played puppy dog his entire career, but this was the one time his self-pity seemed downright tragic. Watching

him reawaken at the behest of new blood — not just Michael B. Jordan's Adonis but director Ryan Coogler — was the year's best special effect, and a win will be deserved, even if he did give us the arm-wrestling picture "Over the Top."

PICTURE: "MAD MAX: FURY ROAD"



Witness "Mad Max: Fury Road" taking home the Best Picture Oscar. (It's not going to happen.) **WARNER BROS. PICTURES**

Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu and Leonardo DiCaprio won't shut up about how hard it was to make "The Revenant." Whatever: "Mad Max" director George Miller shot the world's longest car chase in a freakin' desert and

never once complained. Not only that, he made an angry feminist polemic against dumb old men in the form of a rip-roaring action movie for smart men who want to see the world get better, not go back to being worse.



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Behold Kate Winslet as a Russian mobster with copious hairspray in "Triple 9." BOB MAHONEY, OPEN ROAD FILMS

'Triple 9'

Director: John Hillcoat
Stars: Casey Affleck, Chiwetel Ejiofor
Rating: R

• • • • •

There are way too many great actors in "Triple 9." Ditto plot, ditto vomit-y violence, ditto

insights about the militarization of police, ditto talent behind the lens. Is this the "Avengers: The Age of Ultron" of crime movies, which is to say overstuffed with pure stuff? Or is it jam-packed on purpose? It could be that this seriously clogged thriller is a film about the fog of war at home, in which every character

is in too deep to know they're doomed pawns. Or it might simply be a pack of gangland clichés peopled with too many name stars the film doesn't know what to do with — not even Kate Winslet as a Russian mafioso sporting tall, lacquered '80s hair and Star of David bling.

It's really a bit of both, though "Triple 9" clearly aspires to be an epic like Michael Mann's "Heat." It follows cops and robbers, the latter a gang comprised of corrupt cops (Anthony Mackie, Clifton Collins Jr.), a disgraced cop (Aaron Paul) and a traumatized ex-mercenary (Chiwetel Ejiofor). They're not merely greedy; they're stuck in a Faustian pact with Winslet's fearsome, hammy and awesomely named Irina Vlasov. Perhaps only the fresh fish noble cop (Casey Affleck) can stop them, provided he can untangle the Christmas

light bundle of a plot.

By the time "Triple 9" settles, it reveals itself to be simple, in more ways than one. At a hair under two hours, it often feels chopped up within an inch of its life. It barely has room to breathe. It knows to deliver the sporadic killer set piece, from the mayhem of its two big heists to a mid-film police raid, which finds Affleck's Chris leading a line of cops through a drug house, looking like a human train snaking through tight quarters. Director John Hillcoat ("The Proposition," "Lawless") brings his yen for pitiless brutality to bear on a film where violence is nauseating — even a gang leader's threat that "We train dogs to f— our prisoners" barely registers amidst the din. There's a lot of good stuff here. You just have to sometimes knife through the dense thicket to get to it. **MATT PRIGGE**



Hey, that's Gerard Butler underneath that robot dog or whatever costume in "Gods of Egypt." LIONS GATE

'Gods of Egypt'

Director: Alex Proyas
Stars: Brenton Thwaites, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau
Rating: PG-13

• • • • •

Today, the trashy genre detritus that used to cost three bucks are \$150 million extravaganzas. Even with pricey (but still dicey) CGI, "Gods of Egypt" would fit right in with old Golan-Globus craptaculars, particularly the Lou Ferrigno-starring Italian "Hercules" movies from the '80s. It's an inventively silly — and for the most part pretention-free — eyesore in which Egyptian deities are played by beefcakes who can turn into robot birds and flying dogs, a bald Geoffrey Rush battles a space worm with a staff that shoots lasers, and Chadwick Boseman has his neon blue brain ripped out by the Scottish-North African Gerard Butler. It arrives in late February, so if you're battling a monster cold it's even better if you're high on over-the-counter drugs.

Loosely relating one of Egypt's funkier myths, it tells of the battle between evil, power-mad, spittle-barking god Set (Butler, of course) and debauched Horus (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau). The former has seized the throne, stealing the latter's magic eyes and casting him into exile. It's up to a rando pretty boy mortal, Bek (Brenton Thwaites), to restore Horus' sight and help save Egypt. Most of the details are fuzzy, and it's the kind of movie where characters whimsically gain secret superpowers when the writers run into brick walls, which is often. But the story is more or less streamlined, regularly bombarding our heroes with toothy sand snakes, booby-trapped pyramids and even a brief detour into outer space. That this is watchable at all is cause for celebration, and some of it is outright laudable. Director Alex Proyas ("The Crow," "Dark City") has a knack for visualizing imaginative realms, and here he conjures up a magisterial underworld and a brightly colored Egypt, even if it only boasts one black actor. This busy boondoggle has a sense of humor, which isn't to say it's funny; Thwaites' Bek is saddled with so many groan-inducing one-liners you almost wish he'd been written as a standard, bland everyman. This all might make "Gods of Egypt" sound fun, but it's too cramped and muddled to achieve true bad movie transcendence. In other words, it's no "Jupiter Ascending." **MP**

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Taron Egerton makes for an endearingly goofy Eddie Edwards in the biopic "Eddie the Eagle." LARRY HORRICKS

'Eddie the Eagle'

Director: Dexter Fletcher
Stars: Taron Egerton, Hugh Jackman
Rating: PG-13

• • • • •

"Eddie the Eagle" is the British "Rudy," which is to say it's a true life inspirational tale done more as a light, cheery comedy instead of an angsty drama. It might even be deceptively smart. Where "Rudy" merely meant to uplift, "Eddie the Eagle" — perhaps accidentally — winds up forcing us to question our notion

of greatness and achievement.

Its hero is someone Donald Trump would call a loser, in part because he technically is. The one named Eddie Edwards — played with game eccentricity and a Beaker-from-the-"Muppets"-like mouth shapes by "Kingsman's" Taron Egerton — was a southern England nobody who wound up ski jumping at the Olympics a mere year after picking up the sport. The movie made of his life wants us to think any of us can do anything, but it winds up speaking more usefully about how being the best is kind of bull. **MP**



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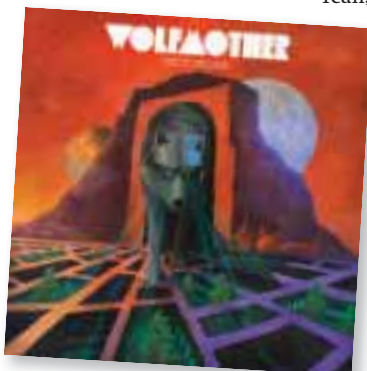
Wolfmother's cool with being 'retro'

The Aussie band's back on tour to promote "Victorious."

RACHEL RACZKA
@rachelraczka
rachel.raczka@metro.us

Wolfmother's more than a decade of reinvention always cycles back to years beyond those they've been active. The Grammy-winning Australian rock band have often been lauded as retro, echoing the stoner-metal likes of Black Sabbath — but meant in the most complimentary way possible. Their fourth studio album, "Victorious," dropped last Friday from Universal and the band kicked off a world tour Wednesday in Minneapolis. We caught frontman Andrew Stockdale to chat the album and what it's like to be "retro."

This album release has



been pretty digitally involved. You even have an app to color in the album art.

Yeah, people love that kind of thing. My daughter's done it about 50 times. She thinks she's going to win some sort of competition for it! It's interesting how interactive things have become, and honestly some of their [submissions] look good, if not better than

the actual cover.

Is it weird having this kind of access between you and your fans?

It's funny because [social media] means so much now and defines you. First it was MySpace, so you'd get a million followers on MySpace and then no one was on MySpace. Then you're like, "I have 30,000 followers on Twitter," but then they're like, "No one cares about Twitter." You're constantly trying to feature the latest social media thing and I don't think that's a fair assessment of a band, or

the value of their music. Sometimes you see something on YouTube but then you see it only has 150 views and you're like, "I still like it, but maybe I shouldn't because no one [else] is watching."

So has social media been a good or a bad thing for you?

You have to participate and you have to be a part of it. And it's good because it's given artists more power in promoting shows and their music, but it can also do your head in as well. If your mood is constantly

guarded by someone's comments [online], you have to be on an up-and-down emotional roller coaster or you have to learn to ignore it. Speaking of YouTube, the "Victorious" video is one to watch on repeat.

Where did the concept come from?

We had a few ideas pitched to us and this one had the tongue-in-cheek sort of comical '60s kitsch thing happening. That made the "Victorious" scene friendlier because we didn't have to be the oppressive force where there will be

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In the song you specifically say "She will be victorious," but who is she?

She's the mythical character in the song, but I have no idea who it is specifically. It just sounded good. I don't know why.

The album's been out for about a week, have you peeked at any reviews? I haven't read anything yet, to this point. My manager sent through reviews, and I said "Are they generally good or bad?" I'll read through them at some point.

With this album — and the ones before it — you get called "retro" quite a bit. How do you take that?

I think it's a compliment. Everything's connected to the past, and we're all influenced from people before us and how they approached things in their style. I feel good about being called retro. I don't see it as a criticism at all.

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10 YEARS



Ryan Fitzpatrick was one of the better quarterbacks in the NFL this past season. GETTY IMAGES

A GLANCE AT THE GIANTS AND JETS AS FREE AGENCY, NFL DRAFT DRAW NEAR

MATT BURKE

OPINION

Matt Burke is the National Sports Editor and a columnist at Metro US.

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Roethlisberger, who many believed was the best QB in the game at certain points in the 2015 season, threw 21 picks and 16 interceptions last season.

Despite Eli's broken-down brother winning it all earlier this month, the NFL is still – first and foremost – a quarterback's league. If you're Philadelphia or the Rams or San Francisco or Cleveland or Houston you're almost hopeless at the beginning of each season, because that No. 1 QB hasn't stepped forward yet. Jets fans know this full well. But if you have a QB you can rely on in the NFL, you're in business. It's a lot less worrisome if your weakness lies in the secondary or at linebacker or at offensive line. Those problems are quickly fixable.

Finding the right guy under center is a different story and – for the moment – the Giants and Jets have capable offensive leaders.

Mock season

Mock draft season is in full swing and we've already posted a few mocks at Metro.us. In our latest mock, we have the Giants taking UCLA linebacker Myles Jack at No. 10. That would be a steal for the G-Men as Jack is going to Dallas at No. 4 in many mocks. Look for the Giants to go defense early in the draft as new head coach Ben McAdoo

surely thinks he already has the offense in a prime spot.

At No. 20, we have the Jets taking Mississippi defensive tackle Robert Nkemdiriche. Nkemdiriche is a top 10 talent in this draft but he smoked some synthetic weed, busted through a double-pane hotel window and fell 15 feet to the ground this past December. Going all early-career, PSA Helen Hunt through a hotel window will draw red flags at draft time each and every time.

With GM Mike Maccagnan nice and comfortable in his second year at the helm, however, don't be surprised if he rolls the dice on some high-risk/high-reward types in the draft and/or free agency.

The 2016 NFL draft will take place from Thursday, April 28 to Saturday, April 30 in Chicago.

Handiwork

The Giants want to resign both Jason Pierre-Paul and Robert Ayers, according to ESPN. It may work out in the end for Jerry Reese as I can't imagine many teams will be throwing bags of money at JPP given what happened last summer.

JPP sued ESPN and Adam Schefter this week, saying that Schefter "improperly obtained [Pierre-Paul's] medical records from a hospital" and then tweeted them out.

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NOTICE OF FORMATION of C 34 Legacy, LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secy. of State of New York (SSNY) on November 16, 2015. Office location: Kings County. SSNY is designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC c/o 277 Malcolm X Blvd., Brooklyn, NY 11233. Purpose: any lawful activity.

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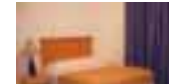
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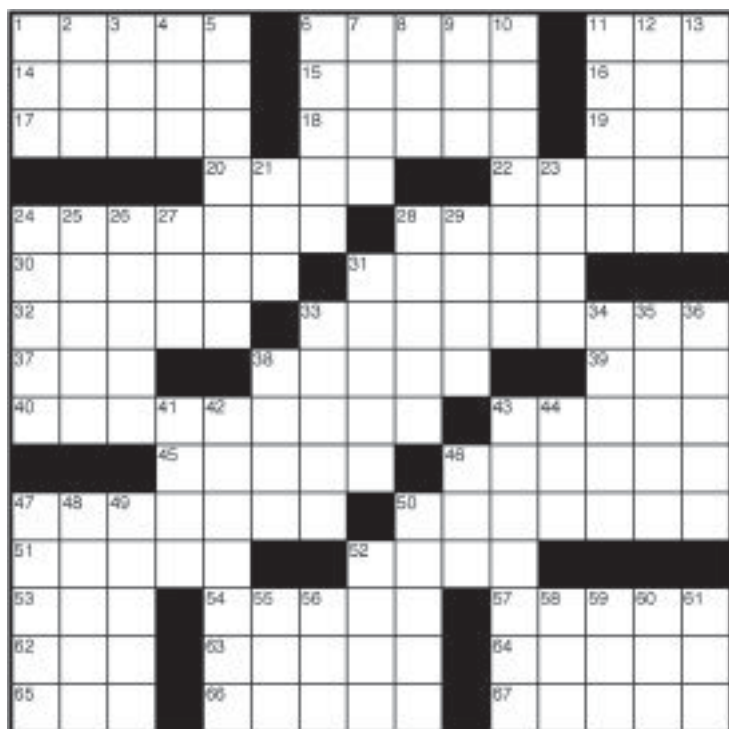
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Across

- 1 On the fritz
- 6 Bwana, in India
- 11 NASA counterpart
- 14 Animal that hisses
- 15 Ooze out
- 16 Geol. formation
- 17 Hero's award
- 18 Rock climber's aid
- 19 Opposite of cheer
- 20 Tiant or Aparicio
- 22 Make changes to
- 24 Staying power
- 28 Third man in the ring
- 30 Put in order
- 31 1 or 2
- 32 Surprise attacks
- 33 With all one's heart
- 37 High dudgeon
- 38 Greet the day
- 39 Minuscule
- 40 More corpulent
- 43 Diva's accolade
- 45 Ph.D. exams
- 46 Less cloudy
- 47 Place to learn
- 50 Wine servers
- 51 Canape toppers
- 52 Spill the beans
- 53 Historian's word
- 54 Major oil hub
- 57 Gung-ho
- 62 "The One I Love" group

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/games

- 63 Us, to Pogo
- 64 Lofty capital
- 65 Six-pointers
- 66 Eats sparingly
- 67 Not get renewed

Down

- 1 Eur. airline
- 2 Dark brew
- 3 Mattress extra
- 4 Ms. Thurman of "Gattaca"
- 5 Adds up
- 6 Tintype hue
- 7 Poles' connector
- 8 Rough shelter
- 9 Bachelor's last words (2 wds.)

- 10 Fund-raiser
- 11 Hearth residue
- 12 Excalibur's holder
- 13 Battery's "+" end
- 21 Et, for Hans
- 23 Ration out
- 24 Take it all off
- 25 Coronet
- 26 Farewell
- 27 Halfway
- 28 Delta maker
- 29 They're easily bruised
- 31 Fakes out, on the rink
- 33 Newspaper type
- 34 Gnome
- 35 Flood barrier
- 36 Century units
- 38 Pow!
- 41 Leaf juncture
- 42 Peaked
- 43 Biceps builder
- 44 Narrow inlet
- 46 JFK watchdog
- 47 Separate
- 48 Like a canary
- 49 Quark habitats
- 50 Potters' supplies
- 52 Cellar, briefly
- 55 Verse lead-in
- 56 Grant foe
- 58 "—, Magoo, m'boy . . ."
- 59 Space between
- 60 Hairpin curve
- 61 Funny Charlotte —

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easy

3			4					7
4	7	2	1					6
	6		2				1	
			9				7	2
			6		8			
8	9				4			
		8			5		1	
1					2	7	5	4
6					1			3

hard

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	6		4		3			
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		2				8		
	3		2			1		6
			5		8		3	
2			1	3		9	6	
5				2				

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Aries Participating in events that mean something to you will give you the strength to make personal changes. Put your plans in motion and don't look back.



Taurus Initiate what you want to see happen. Don't be afraid to do things differently. It's your uniqueness that will attract attention and help you get things done.



Gemini Live, love and laugh. No matter what you do, make your presence felt and your input meaningful. Walk away from negativity, bad influences and unfair situations.



Cancer Put in extra hours working toward something that will help you stand out or beat any challenge or competition you face. Don't give in to emotional blackmail.



Leo Make changes to your living quarters. Voice your thoughts, discuss your intentions and make a plea to a loved one to help make your dreams come true.



Virgo You can enjoy life without spending money or getting involved in someone else's risky affairs. Expand your mind or take part in something that is geared to your benefit.



Libra Emotions will surface if you let someone push you around. If you make plans to do something with someone who's supportive, greater self-awareness and confidence will unfold.



Scorpio Explore new interests or give a unique spin to a project or pastime. A chance to reconnect with someone you enjoyed working with in the past will also contribute to your success.



Sagittarius You'll face opposition if you don't live up to your promises. Have an explanation ready and an alternative solution in place. Protect your reputation and stick to the truth.



Capricorn High energy coupled with interesting ideas will capture others' attention. An unexpected emotional response will lead to a better plan. Don't feel the need to act in haste.



Aquarius Added discipline will pay off. Don't let someone who is disgruntled or negative stand between you and victory. Put yourself first and celebrate your success with a loved one.



Pisces Take a different approach to handling your money and you will make headway. Get together with someone from your past who can help you revisit old dreams. **EUGENIA LAST**

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A photograph of a female teacher with dark hair in a bun, wearing a colorful patterned shirt, interacting with a young Black boy in a classroom. The teacher is holding a small object and looking at the child, who is also looking at the object. The background shows a classroom setting with shelves and educational materials.

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